

# **MEDITATION GUIDANCE**



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## PRELIMINARY HOMAGE

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**Yo so bhagavā araham̐ sammāsambuddho**

*(to the blessed one, the noble fully attained perfect enlightenment)*

**Svākkhāto yena bhagavatā dhammo**

*(to the teaching which he expounded so well, and)*

**Supaṭipanno yassa bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho**

*(to the blessed one's disciples, who have practiced well,)*

**Tam̐ mayam̐ bhagavantam̐ sadhammam̐ sasaṅgham̐**

*(to these the Buddha, dhamma and sangha)*

**Imehi sakkārehi yathāraham̐ āropitehi abhipūjayāma**

*(we render with offerings our rightful homage)*

**Sādhu no bhante bhagavā suciraparinibbuto pi**

*(it is well for us that the blessed one, having attained liberation)*

**Pacchimā janatānukam pamānasā**

*(still had compassion for later generations)*

**Ime sakkāre duggata paṇṇākārabhūte paṭiggaṇhātu**

*(May these simple offering be accepted)*

**Amhākam̐ dīgharattam̐ hitāya sukhāya**

*(for our long lasting benefit and for the happiness it gives us.)*

**Araham̐ sammāsambuddho bhagavā**

*(The noble, the perfectly enlightened and blessed one)*

**Buddham̐ bhagavantam̐ abhivādemī (bow once)**

*(I render homage to the Buddha, the blessed one.)*

**Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo**

*(The teaching so completely explained by him)*

**Dhammam̐ namassāmi (bow once)**

*(I bow to the Dhamma)*

**Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho**

*(The blessed one's disciples, who have practiced well)*

**Śaṅgham̐ namāmi (bow once)**

*(I bow to the Sangha.)*

**Leader:** Handa pubbabhāganamakāram̐ceva buddhānusatinayanca karomase  
**(Now let us pay preliminary homage to the Buddha)**

**All:** Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa (3x)  
**(Homage to the blessed, noble and perfectly enlightened one)**

## MEDITATION GUIDANCE

Meditation, *bhavana*, according to Buddhist terminology, is a technique for development of positive inner strength recognising our own value and the value of others. It is a method of knowing one's own mind and how it works. Knowing the mind helps one to become master of the mind rather than a slave to it. The mind despite being formless, colourless and shapeless, normally, is engaged either in past memories or in the illusory world of the future. One forgets that the present moment is the most important and precious for the whole of one's life. Stress, unhappiness, dissatisfactions, depression and so on cause troublesome mind, which is the result of dwelling into the memories and creating fears of not going to be or creating a condition of 'if that is not' or 'if that is'. If one's body could speak at that moment, it would say 'hey, I am here!' 'Can you notice that I am here with you?'

Meditation, as a daily practice, is a state of being non-judgmental, complete silence and understanding the reality of change as it is taking place. It is a way to find the right medicine for self-created illnesses, anger, hatred, ill-will, dissatisfaction, discomfort and a tool to heal it. Therefore, one has to become a master of one's own mind through one's own diligent effort for the complete liberation from all anxieties, worries, stress and emotions. In order to develop this skill, the Buddha introduced basic guidelines. They are:

1. Observation of body in the body
2. Observation of sensations and feelings
3. Observation of mind process
4. Observation of mental contents

Meditation is to contemplate what one does. However just to contemplate is not enough. In Buddhist meditation one also needs to reflect or concentrate on an object. Therefore, there are two types of meditation in Buddhism, Serenity meditation and Insight meditation.

## HOW TO START

Meditation is a very special gift to use your time well, and get the right balance. However, it would not be easy to observe and know these objects at once. It takes time, dedication and determination. Therefore, at the beginning of practice, first of all, one has to be free from any negativity. Live a moral life, controlled mind and generating loving-kindness and compassion to oneself and to others.

Secondly, a suitable time and a quiet place to meditate, if you have never tried to notice your mind and experience a silent moment a comfortable space, are definitely key to the realisation of complete serenity. A quiet place with minimum distractions and disturbances is ideal to begin with. Some prefer early in the morning others in the evening or both to start with. One can start with 5/10 minutes of each session. It should be increased gradually over the course of time but not more than an hour.

Thirdly, choosing a comfortable meditative posture that does not lead to physical pain is essential. Although, mindfulness meditation is not just doing sitting meditation but being aware of every mental activity in daily life, sitting meditation is very important as it will allow the body to remain in one position until the end of the meditation period. A frequent change on posture, further, is not conducive for gaining a deeper level of concentration and insight. If pain or discomfort becomes intolerable, one can change the posture but the successful meditator should try to move as minimum as one can. A comfortable sitting posture can be either on a chair or on the floor depending on individual preferences. Whatever comfortable posture for oneself is a good posture. Posture is just an essential part that helps the process of purification of mind.

Finally, once settled comfortably down, gently close eyes and rest hands in a comfortable way. In case of sitting on the floor and legs crossed put one hand on top of the other, palms upwards. If sitting on chair, legs should be placed on the ground completely flat but do not lean on the back. One can rest hands on knees or rest on the lap one hand on top of the other.

Release all worries, stress and responsibilities. Notice sensations on your body, feel the existence of your physical body sitting calmly and remain at the present moment mentally and physically. Feel the greatness of the body. Feel the sensation throughout the body. Try to be completely one being with the body.

Collect your attention and relax the body from top of the head to the tips of the feet. Spend some time with the body and scan your body to become fully aware of it. Begin with top of the head, your neck, hands, chest, abdomen, legs and feet and slowly on your toes. This will help to develop concentration. Allow awareness of the body, and release tension wherever one feels any tension.

***Tips: Just with a body and meditation object***

***Sitting Practice:*** Choose a suitable time and leave all responsibilities during that chosen time. Choose a quiet place, free from any electronic devices, allowing yourself complete silence.

*Sit in a comfortable and relaxed position. It is very important to sit with a relaxed body.*

*Gently close your eyes and spend some time with the body. Just feel the sitting body, the different sensations, and the different movements in your body.*

*Feel sensation and just pay bare attention to every feeling within the body. Try to live with the body.*

*At the end of the period, sit quietly for a minute or two and reflect on your experiences during meditation and prepare for normal life.*

***Walking Practice:*** Standing: looking ahead around 2 metres, standing still, feeling sensation throughout the body, feeling support from the earth and feeling greatness

*Walking: being mindful of every right goes, left goes*

*Turning: keep standing for a few minutes and turning slowly and mindfully turning foot*

## MEDITATION OBJECT & DISTRACTION

*Dwelling in the cave of the heart, the mind, without form, wanders far and alone.  
Those who subdue this mind are liberated from the bonds of Mara.*

- *The Buddha, Dhp 37*

The above stanza gives an insight into the nature of mind that exists nowhere but everywhere. To tame such a wild mind, scattered far and wide, wandering off and easily getting lost in thoughts, needs something to play on or be with. To bring into the moment of now, therefore, it needs an object, which can be sensed, can be observed clearly and engaged with. It is a starting point of contemplation that begins with bare attention on the body in the body and later given meditation object, which helps to bring that scattered and ruminating mind to one meditative object. Meanwhile, whatever other objects arise known as secondary objects of meditation, which should be observed objectively, noted in its true reality and let go once fully acknowledged.

At the initial stage once the body is fully relaxed; there would be obvious movements that can be noticed. Among those natural movements are the breath coming in and the breath going out. Meanwhile, when breathing in the abdomen will automatically rise and when breathing out the abdomen will naturally fall. Whichever object is stronger either breath or the abdomen can be object of meditation. Here, the process of inflation and deflation of the abdomen or rising and falling of the abdomen due to air coming in and going out will be introduced as a primary object of meditation. Attentively feel the sensation, perceive the growing process of the abdomen and observe it. When the abdomen rises, bring your attention, fully aware of the rising process, observing it closely and noting the inflated abdomen as 'rising'. There is just bare attention of the process and acknowledgment of the rising moment as it occurs. The process of rising should be simultaneous with the noting of the mind. It should not be one after another or before or after.

## ***Tips: MEDITATION OBJECT***

*To begin with Continue from first tip.*

*When you breathe in the abdomen rises. Attentively notice it as rising in a relaxed way, feel the sensation, perceive the rising process and observe it by establishing mindfulness at the navel where the abdomen rises.*

*When you breathe out the abdomen falls. Notice it as falling. Bring it to your attention, feel the sensation, perceive the falling process and observe it by establishing mindfulness.*

*We are not controlling breathing for the abdomen to rise or holding the breath or controlling its fall but trying to let the breath flow naturally.*

*Observe the abdomen as it rises and falls. Establish mindfulness on it. Notice as it happens. Not as you want it to happen.*

*At the end of the period, sit quietly for a minute or two and reflect on your experiences during meditation and prepare for normal life.*

### ***Walking Practice:***

*Standing: looking ahead around 2 metres, standing still, feeling sensation throughout the body, feeling support from the earth and feeling greatness*

*Walking: mindful of every step by lifting of foot and placing of foot*

*Turning: keep standing for a few minutes and turning slowly and mindfully turning foot. 3 pairs of 6 moves for complete turning*

# DISTRACTION

Mind never remains on one thing but always sneaks away from thought after thought. Continue non stopping engagements on thoughts are the cause of stress, depression and unhappy situations. Mindfulness will help one to understand the distraction and narrows mental activities down in order to use that energy in a right way to deal with our stressful busy daily schedule.

In the practice of meditation your mind works in thought processes. Thinking again and again repeatedly observes that the thinking mind is thinking. Acknowledge that your mind is thinking and gently note its nature of thinking as it is being achieved at the very moment. In case of the mind flowing into the past, accept it that you are in the past memories and acknowledge it. Similarly, if you are planning for the future, accept it as you are planning for the future and acknowledge it. Once properly observed, acknowledge and note its true nature. Finally, that acceptance of true reality will assist to letting any feelings go and bring the mind back to the present moment. Therefore, always be ready to start from the very moment. One needs to develop right understanding of it because a distracted mind will never assist to realise insight.

## **Tips: *Noting Distraction***

*Begin with previous two tips respectively.*

*Every moment when the mind is distracted, do not worry, allow it to occur.*

*Accept its occurrence and acknowledge it by noting it and letting it go*

*In case of the thoughts, accepting its occurrence and acknowledge it by noting it and letting go and then coming back to the primary object, rising and falling of the abdomen.*

*Feeling the rising and falling is one thing, thinking about it is another, so, make sure you feel it not think it.*

*Our only job is to allow it and just pay bare attention to it.*

*At the end of the period, sit quietly for a minute or two and reflect on your experiences during meditation and prepare for normal life.*

***Walking Practice:***

*Standing: looking ahead around 2 metres, standing still, feeling sensation throughout the body, feeling support from the earth and feeling greatness*

*Walking: being aware of moving foot, mindful of every step by lifting of foot and moving of foot and placing of foot*

*Turning: keep standing for a few minutes and turning slowly and mindfully turning foot. 3 pairs of 6 moves for complete turning*



## MENTAL NOTE

In the meditation, it is not important to name the word or what one sees but the right attitude it and full observation and make a mental note of it. So, bare attention, being aware and being mindful are vital processes in the practice and development of insight meditation.

When one is concentrating on the rising and falling of the abdomen, it is obvious that the mind will wander or thoughts arise, which is the natural habit pattern of the mind. Doubt may arise. Why am I doing this? How long is it going to be? What will happen after this? Have I closed the door?

When will my food will be ready? And so on. One should not be disappointed and get angry with these types of distractions, but should establish mindfulness on the distraction itself. Normally, the practitioner chooses a primary object for establishing mindfulness, whereas, secondary objects, generally known as distractions, choose the practitioner. In this case, be aware and gently observe these distractions intuitively. Allowing these distractions to occur and accepting them with equanimity is the right attitude. Acknowledge the distraction and notice it as it really is with a neutral mind during its happening. Once fully mindful of the present thought, it generates awareness. Complete aware of the thought generate understanding of its character and when fully understood the true nature of the thought, which is bound to change sooner or later, one would let the thought go naturally. Finally, the mind will be completely detached from the thought that generates complete freedom.

Whatever is the situation at any given moment, be aware and be mindful of the situation without losing the mindfulness. It is obvious however, that while meditating one definitely faces discomfort such as itches, aches, pain and the like. One needs to be fully alert at the very moment of occurrence of that and observe its true nature in order to overcome the discomfort. With the inability to note the moment of arising of that feeling of discomfort, one cannot be aware of the feeling, and this may lead to series of thoughts generating the deluded mind to consider that pain is in the mind or 'I am in pain.'

Insight meditation is paying close attention to the present moment, which means being fully aware of all activities of six senses; eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. It is the dynamic art of paying attention to daily life performances even very small activities like brushing teeth, combing hair, drinking, and eating, rather than doing things mechanically without being aware of our actions or without being mindful. Consciously try to be present at the present moment with bare attention and an attitude of radical acceptance. Clearly comprehending everything that we are experiencing in our day to day life, emotions of the pleasant, the unpleasant, neutral feelings, turmoil, anxiety, sadness etc, are created because of contacts with our six-senses. Therefore, it is very important to be aware of every activity

such as standing, walking, talking, sleeping and sitting in order to establish a balanced mind. So, if one can really learn to practise mindfulness and be aware of every activity in every moment of life then meditation becomes a way of life which leads to a completely peaceful and happy life.

*“Oh bhikkhus! in going forward and in going back, in looking straight on and in looking away from the front, in bending, in stretching, in wearing, in carrying, in eating, in drinking, chewing, savouring, in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking, speaking, keeping silent, thus, one remains mindful.”*

- *The Buddha, Satipatthana sutta*

### ***Noting the Moment***

*Bring your attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen. Feel the sensation.*

*Experience the present moment with the help of rising and falling of the abdomen, here and now.*

*If you are having thoughts, acknowledge it by noting it as thinking, thinking, thinking.*

*Similarly, whatever sensations are there, just be aware of that sensation. Observe that sensation as it is and make a mental note of them as they are.*

*If thoughts are there, just know that you are having thoughts, acknowledge it and come back to the primary object.*

*At the end of the period, sit quietly for a minute or two and reflect on your experiences during meditation and prepare for normal life.*

### ***Walking Practice:***

*Standing: looking ahead around 2 metres, standing still, feeling sensation throughout the body, feeling support from the earth and feeling greatness*

*Walking: being aware of moving foot, mindful of every move beginning from heels up, lifting of foot and moving of foot and placing of foot*

*Turning: keep standing for a few minutes and turning slowly and mindfully turning foot. 3 pairs of 6 moves for complete turning*

## **Meditation on Universal Love**

*Sit in a comfortable position, let the body relax. Place your right hand on the same side of the chest where the heart is. Feel the rhythm of your heart. Open the door of your heart like opening a flower. Feel the sensation of kindness and spread love and compassion to yourself.*

*May I be happy*

*May I be filled with loving kindness*

*May I be well*

*May I be peaceful and at ease.*

*Can you feel the vibrant feeling of love and compassion?*

*You are saying it from the bottom of your heart. You are not saying it just like parrot does. Feel it, be a best friend with yourself. Spread the love and compassion from the bottom of your heart to each and every part of the body, your whole body. You are really wishing for yourself that you will be well physically and mentally. Feel peace and tranquillity in every part of the body.*

*Let us forgive and forget whatever wounds there may have been caused by us to others, and to us by others. Forgive yourself and others by realising the act of wounds and accepting it and share love and compassion to all. I forgive you all.*

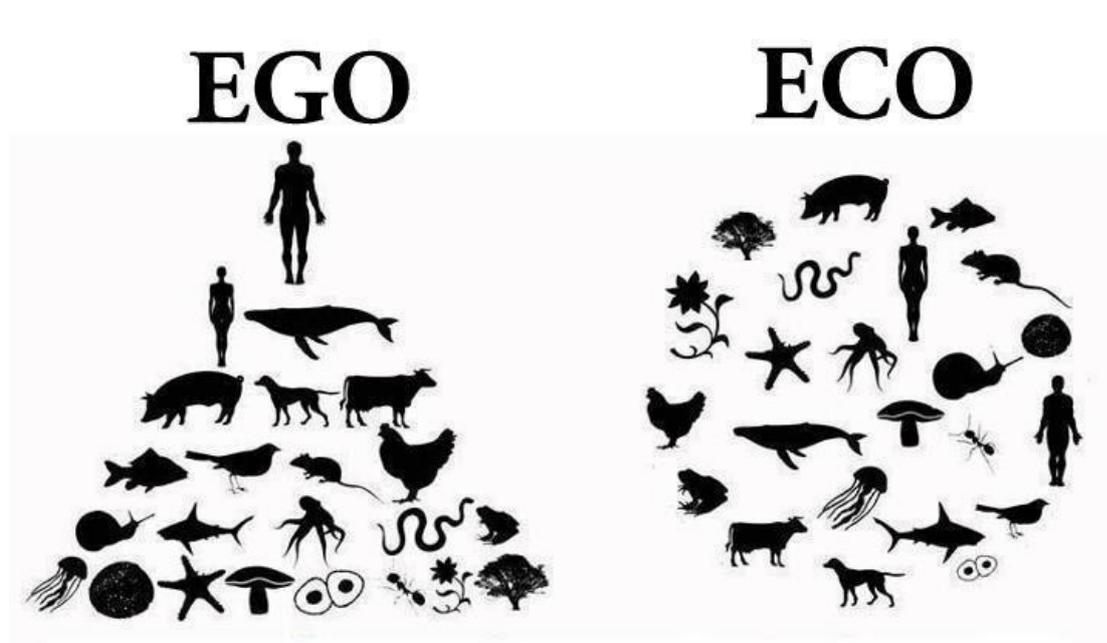
*Feel the vibration of your heart. Open your heart and share love and compassion to one and all.*

*Whatever beings there are, may they be happy, may they be filled with love, may they be well and may they be in peace.*

*Similarly, share love and compassion to all other sentient beings in the world*

*At the end of the meditation sit quietly for a minute or two and reflect on your experiences during meditation and come back to normal life.*

*It is highly recommended to practice this daily.*



**NOTE:**

*\*if you are in medication please continue taking it unless GP instructed. No not mixed with other technique. Use each technique differently.*

*\*diligent practice bears fruit. If you are sure that you have fully understood and your concentration has been improved each session then go to next session.*

*\*you may drop email to share your experiences or share during session to get more clarification on practice ([sujanbhante@gmail.com](mailto:sujanbhante@gmail.com))*

*\*every moment is moment of practice and one at a time is the key.*

# Varapunya Meditation Centre



Varapunya meditation centre was begun in September 2012 as a centre for learning and sharing personal direct experiences of practicing meditation for a better understanding of its concept and practice in order to apply in daily life and enhancement of spiritual journey.

‘Helping hands, healing hearts’ is the Centre’s mission, which it realises through activity at the Centre and through collaborative projects in the communities and schools of Aberdeenshire. It is a place for learning, devotional practice and for sharing direct personal experiences of practicing Buddhist meditation. The guiding principles of the Centre’s works are the teachings of the Buddha within the Theravada tradition of Buddhism.

The centre also offers secular Mindfulness based courses to help you to build foundation for better understanding of personal life, relationships and professional work.

If you have ever considered learning to meditate, or to enquire into Buddhism and what it has to offer in our present world, then you may wish to contact and visit the Centre. For further information please see <http://www.varapunyabuddhistsociety.org>

1. Tuesday evening 7-9: (This is a good session for beginners who are willing to learn how to do meditation. It starts with chanting-sitting-sharing)
2. Sunday Meditation Session 10:00 am -11:15 am (Sitting-Walking Sitting)
3. Mindfulness Based living Course (Mon & Wed evening 630-930)\*  
(\*subject to condition)

Opening Hours:

First hour 9 am-2 pm

Second our 6 pm-9.30 pm

The centre also regularly gives freshly cooked foods for the homeless people and struggling to eat due to poverty in Aberdeen. Every little help make huge difference. So, why wait for share our love and compassion. You can one of them to make changes in our society. If you want to see positive change and would like to contribute please contact the centre or write a cheque payable to Varapunya SBS and send it to the centre.

## THE BUDDHA



The Buddha, Prince Siddhattha, was born in 543 BC in ancient Nepal. When he was 16 years old, he married with princess Yasodhara. They had a son called Rahula. Prince Siddhattha, was 29, left the palace and went to study for Six years.

He became the Buddha when he was 35 years old. He travelled for 45 years spreading his message. He entered supreme happiness at the age of 80. Now, his message has become the philosophy of Buddhism. His followers are called Buddhists.

To become a Buddhist it is necessary of take three refuges;

1. I go to the Buddha for refuge
2. I go to the dhamma for refuge
3. I go to the Sangha for refuge

As a Buddhist you have to know and practice these five basic rules:

- Not harming any living beings but love every one
- Not taking what doesn't belong to you but share with every one
- Not being greedy but respect each other
- Not telling lies or speaking unkindly
- Not clouding the mind with drink or drugs but being mindful

Buddha teaches that

1. All life knows unhappiness
2. This unhappiness has a cause
3. Unhappiness can be brought to an end
4. The way to bring it to an end

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